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OTR 80-3700

17 JAN 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Director of Training
Deputy Director for Administration

FROM:
Chairman, Language Development Committee

SUBJECT: Report of the Language Development
Committee for FY 1979 (U)

1. This memorandum transmits the report of the Language Development Committee for FY 1979. It contains an analysis of the Agency's foreign language skills inventory, examines staffing in terms of requirements, reports on the language skills of new employees, assesses language training and testing during the period, and summarizes the existing Language Incentive Program. (U)

2. Language skills in the Agency continued their slow decline, but a new impetus to reverse the long-term trend became apparent during the final months of FY 1979 when the implementation of the new Language Incentive Program was anticipated. Increases in Unit Language Requirements, full-time enrollments, and proficiency tests for both new and old employees indicate a realization in the Agency during FY 1979 of the need to emphasize foreign language capability at the professional level. The Agency's responsiveness to the general conclusions of the President's Commission in the form of an active program to increase the quantity and quality of language skills appears to mark a turning point in addressing the Agency's perennial language problem. (U)

Attachment

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REPORT OF THE
LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Fiscal Year 1979

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Report of the
Language Development Committee for
FY 1979 (U)

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REPORT OF THE
LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE FOR
FY 1979 (U)

SUMMARY OF HIGHLIGHTS

During fiscal 1979 the Agency continued to register a net loss of language skills at the minimum professional proficiency level or better.*

The Agency adopted a new language incentive program, effective 1 October 1979.

Unit Language Requirements (ULRs)** increased 64% over FY 1978; however, complete fulfillment of ULRs dropped 12%.

The number of students enrolled on a full-time basis in the Office of Training (OTR) language training increased 25% over FY 1978.

The trend toward shorter periods of training for beginning full-time students continued and in a greater degree than in FY 1978.

The number of proficiency tests administered by the OTR Language School increased 62% over FY 1978. About one-third of the tests were administered to prospective Career Trainees.
(U)

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*Definitions of Speaking Language Proficiency Levels

Elementary Proficiency (S-1): Able to satisfy routine travel needs and minimum courtesy requirements.

Limited Working Proficiency (S-2): Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements.

Minimum Professional Proficiency (S-3): Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics.

Full Professional Proficiency (S-4): Able to use the language fluently and accurately on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs.

Native or Bilingual Proficiency (S-5): Speaking proficiency equivalent to that of an educated native speaker. (U)

**Explained on page 6.

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FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS INVENTORY

During fiscal year 1979 the Agency's speaking skills inventory at the minimum professional level (S-3) and better continued the declining trend reported in past annual reports with a loss of [] S-3 and better skills out of 1955 possessed by staff personnel. Unlike last year when native skills suffered a big loss, this year the decrease in this category was only by 1.4%. On the other hand, the full professional skills were down 5.7%, while the minimum professional skills dropped 3.9%. []

The following chart shows the decline in the number of S-3 and better skills possessed by staff personnel during the five-year period 1974-1979.* []

CHART 1

CIA Speaking Skills at S-3 and Better (1974-1979)

NO. OF EMPLOYEES

5 4 3
PROFICIENCY LEVELS

*This year the Language Control Register produced by the Office of Personnel included information on tested contract personnel. The professional skills possessed by these individuals but not included in Chart 1 are: S-5 = [] S-4 = [] and S-3 = []

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Table 1 illustrates the decline or increase in the number of S-3 or better skills possessed by staff personnel in comparison to the Agency's staff strength figures during the last five years. It is significant that in general during this period the rate of loss of professional skills is about twice as large as the decrease in personnel strength. It is also noteworthy that even when the Agency grew in personnel from a previous year--as in 1976 when the number of staff personnel [redacted]--the professional-level skills [redacted]

TABLE 1

Professional-level Speaking Skills
Versus Agency Staff Personnel Strength
(1974-1979)

| Year | S-3 and Better Skills | % Change | Staff Strength | % Change |
|------|-----------------------|----------|----------------|----------|
|------|-----------------------|----------|----------------|----------|

1974
1975
1976
1977
1978
1979

| | | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| [redacted] | [redacted] | [redacted] | [redacted] | [redacted] |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|

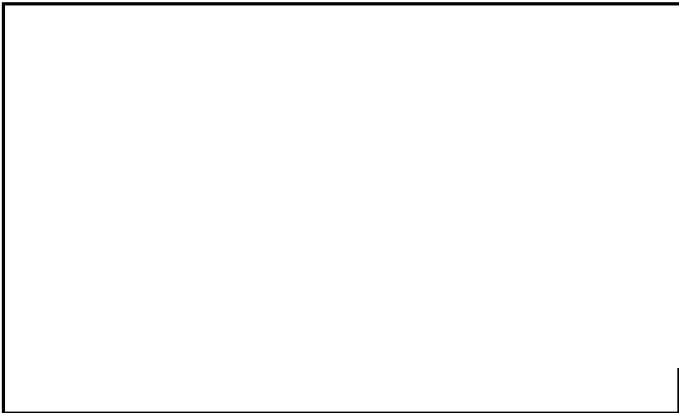

The tables which follow present the Agency's language capabilities at the minimum professional level or better possessed by staff personnel and the rate of change since 1974. Of the 10 languages which account for [redacted] of the professional-level language skills in the Agency, only Chinese [redacted] and Russian [redacted] had increases in the number of S-3 or better speakers. This fiscal year Russian increased very significantly [redacted] from FY 1978 in the number of professional skills. This increase was attributed to a large extent to Language School training. In comparison to the losses in the "principal" languages, the 40 "smaller" languages which account for [redacted] of all professional-level skills recorded an increase of [redacted] in the number of speakers with S-3 or better. During 1974-1979 the Agency lost all S-3 or better speakers in [redacted] but gained professional-level capability in [redacted].

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TABLE 2

Speaking Capabilities at Professional
Levels in the Principal Languages

| | <u>1974</u> | <u>1978</u> | <u>1979</u> | Pct. Change in Speaking <u>1974-1979</u> |
|---------------|--|-------------|-------------|--|
| 1. French |  | | | |
| 2. Spanish | | | | |
| 3. German | | | | |
| 4. Russian | | | | |
| 5. Chinese | | | | |
| 6. Italian | | | | |
| 7. Portuguese | | | | |
| 8. Japanese | | | | |
| 9. Arabic | | | | |
| 10. Greek | | | | |
| Total | | | |  |

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TABLE 3

Speaking Capabilities at the Minimum
Professional Level or Better in the "Smaller" Languages

| | <u>1974</u> | <u>1978</u> | <u>1979</u> | <u>Change</u> <u>1974-1979</u> |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Albanian | | | | |
| 2. Amharic | | | | |
| 3. Armenian | | | | |
| 4. Bulgarian | | | | |
| 5. Burmese | | | | |
| 6. Cambodian | | | | |
| 7. Cantonese | | | | |
| 8. Czech | | | | |
| 9. Danish | | | | |
| 10. Dutch | | | | |
| 11. Finnish | | | | |
| 12. Haitian Cr. | | | | |
| 13. Hebrew | | | | |
| 14. Hindi | | | | |
| 15. Hungarian | | | | |
| 16. Icelandic | | | | |
| 17. Indonesian | | | | |
| 18. Korean | | | | |
| 19. Lao | | | | |
| 20. Latvian | | | | |
| 21. Lithuanian | | | | |
| 22. Luba | | | | |
| 23. Nepali | | | | |
| 24. Norwegian | | | | |
| 25. Pushtu | | | | |
| 26. Persian | | | | |
| 27. Polish | | | | |
| 28. Romanian | | | | |
| 29. Serbo-Croat. | | | | |
| 30. Slovak | | | | |
| 31. Slovenian | | | | |
| 32. Swahili | | | | |
| 33. Swedish | | | | |
| 34. Tagalog | | | | |
| 35. Thai | | | | |
| 36. Turkish | | | | |
| 37. Ukrainian | | | | |
| 38. Urdu | | | | |
| 39. Vietnamese | | | | |
| 40. Yiddish | | | | |
| Total | | | | |

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UNIT LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS AND STAFFING*

The past fiscal year marked the development and initial implementation of a new language incentive program which replaced the Language Proficiency Cash Awards (LPCA) program adopted in 1971. The new program, which pays an addition to compensation to officers who fill ULR positions, had a significant impact on the directorates' assessment of their language needs. The result of the effort to examine positions in terms of language use resulted in an increase in the number of ULRs from the 1978 total of [] in 1979 []. On the other hand, compared with last fiscal year, complete fulfillment of language requirements fell by nearly []. Part of the decline is because the sudden increase of requirements found many individuals without valid proficiency tests. The single most important factor, however, is that the Agency does not have enough language skills at the minimum professional level or better which are possessed by individuals with the appropriate occupational category. []

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*The Agency system for identifying language needs and assessing language capability is called Unit Language Requirements (ULRs). A ULR refers to a statement by a component as to what positions require knowledge of a foreign language, in what skills (reading, speaking, understanding), and at what level. Using organizational elements, e.g., an overseas station or a Headquarters Branch, as the "Language Unit," the ULR system permits matching of ULR requirements against the skills (reading, speaking, understanding, or a combination) held by any individual in the unit and who falls in a specified occupational category. It is important to note that matching is done according to the specific proficiency levels stipulated by the component. This means that, if the requirement for a given language is "3" in reading and speaking, unless the individual possesses that level in both skills, the requirements are reported to be partially satisfied if the incumbent possesses some skill in the language required. (U)

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Attendance and Completion of Language Courses: The trend toward shorter periods of training for beginning full-time students, which we reported last year, was more pronounced during FY 1979. Of the [] full-time beginning-level students who completed training, only [] remained in training for at least [] of the advertised course length. This compares with [] for 1977 and [] for 1978. This fiscal year, as last year, most beginning students stayed in training for the complete period stated in their training requests; however, many sponsoring components enroll students for periods less than the lengths advertised in the OTR Catalog of Courses. On the other hand, this past year we observed a promising occurrence with regard to completion of part-time training. Although completion of part-time training is still a problem, the percentage of students who remained in training long enough to receive final training reports which are given after 10 or more hours of training increased from [] in 1978 to [] during 1979. (U)

Skills Gains Through Language School Training: Based on data for all types of full-time and part-time Agency language courses, there were [] speaking gains and [] reading gains from lower levels to minimum professional proficiency (R-3/S-3) or better during the fiscal year. (U)

Language Training at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) and at Other External Facilities: During FY 1979, [] individuals were trained at non-Agency facilities in [] different languages. FSI, in Rosslyn, Virginia, [] showed a decrease [] during 1974-1978. Washington, D.C., colleges, private language schools, and public schools as well as some overseas schools were used for the remaining [] nongovernment enrollments. (C)

TESTING

During FY 1979, the Language School tested [] individuals for language proficiency, including students who completed language training and new employees and applicants who claimed language proficiency. The number of tests for the year represents a very significant increase [] over the previous year and which is attributable to the new language incentive program and to the emphasis given to the Career Training Program. The number of prospective Career Trainees tested was extraordinarily high in comparison to the previous year. During FY 1978, [] prospective Career Trainees were tested in comparison to [] for the current fiscal year. This represents an increase of []. Although proficiency tests were administered in [] languages, the largest part of the testing effort [] was concentrated in four languages: French [] tests), Spanish [], German [] and Russian []. (C)

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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Report of the Language Development Committee for FY 1979

FROM:

Chairman/LDC
1026 C of C

EXTENSION

NO.

OTR 80-3700

DATE

17 JAN 1980

STAT

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S
INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

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DDA
7D-24 Hqs.

2.

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DDCI
7D-6011 Hqs.

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